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AUTHOR Kofke, Crystal L.
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ABSTRACT

Prepared for those interested in providing nonsexist education, this guide offers information pertaining to sexism in textbooks and educational materials. Parts one and two contain a discussion of ways to identify forms of bias and provide guidelines for eliminating sex bias and for analyzing content and language usage in educational materials. Part three offers suggestions for the use of existing sex-biased materials, including a writing and rewriting exercise designed to help educators make decisions about the best way to handle sexism in materials, and suggested responses to the exercise. The guide also contains a list of selected resources about sexism. (FL)

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ELIMINATING SEX BIAS IN TEXTBOOKS AND EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

by
Crystal L. Kofke

Institute for Equality in Education
University of Colorado at Denver
1050 Ninth Street
Denver, CO 80202

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Foreword

The Institute for Equality in Education is a federally funded sex-desegregation training institute which is under Title IV of the Civil Rights Act. The Institute provides training workshops, follow-up consultation, and resources to participating school districts in the state of Colorado. Participants not only attend workshops on Title IX and sex equity topics, but are also involved in implementing projects in their own school or district. Staff of the Institute make field visitations to the districts to provide assistance on their projects. As a result of their involvement with the training workshops and project implementation, participants are expected to serve as resource persons for their districts; thus, designing, planning, and conducting an in-service for a selected target group within their school or district.

Providing quality non-sexist resource materials is a critical component of the training, project implementation, and in-service activities. Materials were not always readily available to meet the needs of our participants. Therefore, this handbook was prepared as an attempt to provide such materials to our particicipants and other educators interested in providing sex-fair education. We hope it will be helpful to its readers, and that you will share with us your opinions, reactions, and criticisms as you use this handbook.

Other publications produced by the Institute staff include:

-Caves to Condos: A Non-Sexist Curriculum Guide for Practical Arts Grade 7-8. Joan Froede.

-Educators' Handbook on Federal Anti-Sex Discrimination Laws. James Mercer

-Projects for Providing Sex Fair Education: A Planning and Implementing Guide. Deborah Mayer, James Mercer and Cynthia Valentine.

Special acknowledgement should be given to Bellverie Ross and Mae Murrietta for the typing of the manuscript.

Nancy A. Scott, Ed. D.
Director
Institute for Equality in Education
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INTRODUCTION

Much has been written about the harmful effects of sex-role stereotyping on children and all people. Sex-role stereotyping consists of arbitrarily assigning certain traits, abilities, and expectations to people solely on the basis of their sex, regardless of their attributes as individual people. Traditional stereotypes assign girls and women to subordinate, passive roles and limit their participation in areas valued intellectually and economically in our society. Men are stereotyped into active, dominant roles outside of the home, and they are often prohibited from displaying emotion. Often, we begin to develop expectations in terms of our stereotypes. Statements are made such as, "Boys like mechanical things; girls like to cook and sew." When enough of these kinds of statements are made, the generalization takes on the force of a social dictum - whether it actually fits the individual members of the group involved or not.[1] Behavioral expectations based on sex-role stereotypes often limit the choices and options that are open to children as they are channeled into certain behaviors to fit the stereotypes.

Educational materials reach millions of children at a time when their vision of themselves and society is taking shape.[2] Textbooks and other materials have a pervasive influence on children's self-image and in the development of their thinking about the way the world should be. The power of instructional materials to shape attitudes is particularly strong and direct in the early and middle grades when they constitute much of the student's information about the world. The material contained in textbooks represents - at least by inference - both the kind of learning and the particular content that has the institutional stamp of approval.[3] It is the easiest knowledge for the student to acquire. Often, textbooks determine curriculum, and what is covered in the text ends up being what the school in fact teaches. Therefore, it is extremely important that materials used in schools do not continue to perpetuate sex-role stereotypes, but instead foster a sense of personal worth and dignity and a respect for the abilities and rights of both women and men. Educational materials must reflect the changes that are occurring in society that will enable everyone to fulfill his or her potential regardless of sex.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 offers no specific regulations with respect to textbooks and educational materials. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare does recognize that sex stereotyping in textbooks and curricular materials is a serious matter; however, they do not feel that the Federal government should be thrust in the role of censor for local areas. It is the intent of HEW officials that school districts will deal with this problem in the exercise of their general control over curriculum. It is important for school district personnel to carry out a plan to eliminate sex bias in textbooks. Research has shown that boys and girls are, in fact, treated differently in textbooks. Women on Words and Images in Princeton, New Jersey studied 2760 stories in 134 elementary school readers.[4] Their findings indicated that the ratio of boy-centered to girl-centered stories was 5:2 with three times as many adult male characters as adult female characters. Differential treatment of the sexes also occurred with respect to role models. There are 147 different role possibilities suggested for boys; for girls, only 25. Other research confirms these findings and points out the severity of the problem of sex-role stereotyping in textbooks.

[1]Pa. Dept. of Education, Self Study Guide to Sexism in the Schools, Harrisburg, Pa: 1972, p.1.
[2]Macmillan, Guidelines for Creating Positive Sexual and Racial Images in Educational Materials, New York: p.1.
[3]Pa. Dept. of Education, op. cit., p. 11.
[4]Women on Words and Images, Dick and Jane as Victims, Sex Stereotyping in Children's Readers, Princeton, New Jersey: 1975.

Many school district personnel realize that it is difficult to create a sex fair environment without evaluating textbooks and educational materials for sex bias and then taking steps to eliminate that bias. Publishing companies have responded to pressure from educators and parents to publish materials that are non-sexist. Most of the major publishing companies have developed guidelines for avoiding stereotypes in textbooks and educational materials. In situations in which it is not possible to purchase new non-sexist books, textbook advisory committees must learn to recognize and identify bias in existing materials so that they can develop strategies for the best use of these materials.

The following handbook discusses information pertaining to sexism in textbooks and educational materials. Parts I and II are suggested for use by textbook selection committees and librarians in their evaluation of textbooks for purchase. Part III presents strategies for using existing materials that should be helpful to teachers as they strive to eliminate sexism in their classrooms.

PART I

RECOGNIZING AND IDENTIFYING FORMS OF BIAS

Recognizing bias in instructional materials is a crucial first step before any constructive action can be taken to eliminate or correct the bias. Many guidelines have been developed by publishers, state education departments, and local textbook advisory committees for identifying sex stereotyping in educational materials. A discussion and summary of the forms of bias that are often found in textbooks and educational materials follow.

Invisibility/Exclusion

The most fundamental form of bias in instructional materials is the complete or relative exclusion of a particular group or groups from representation or consideration in text and/or illustrations. History, as it is recorded, tends to emphasize those events in which male experience predominated, particularly where military and political events are highlighted. Language arts exercises often use only males in examples. The effect of this exclusion is to imply that certain groups are of less value, importance, and significance in our society.

Stereotyping

When traditional or rigid roles or attributes are assigned to a particular group, the members of that group are stereotyped as all being the same. Stereotyping in instructional materials often occurs in reference to physical appearance, intellectual attributes, personality characteristics, career roles, domestic roles, and social placement. Some common stereotypes are that all women are mothers, that women are dependent and men are independent, etc. Spelling sentences depict girls and women involved in household chores and boys and men doing some physical activity — often outdoors. This stereotyping denies a student knowledge of the diversity, complexity, and variation which characterize any group of human beings. Persons who see themselves portrayed only in stereotypic ways may internalize these stereotypes and fail to identify and develop their own unique abilities, interests, and potentials.

Imbalance/Selectivity

Instructional materials may also perpetuate bias when they reflect only one interpretation of an issue, situation or group of people. An example of imbalance would be a textbook's focus upon the Native American as an impediment to white settlement, while ignoring the role of Indian guides in vitrually every known white exploration, or the patronizing attitude that textbooks convey about the participation of women in the temperance movement without also emphasizing the value of their contribution to the social reform movements of the time.

Imbalance also occurs when a text gives a disproportionate number of examples that are male-oriented. Using all boys' names in math problems or discussing only the role of men leaders in settlement without a discussion of the contributions of women in pioneer history are examples of imbalance.

Unreality

Many textbooks portray our history and our contemporary life experience in an unrealistic manner. Often, any subject that could be controversial is omitted, and discussions of discrimination and prejudice are avoided. When discrimination is

mentioned, it is presented matter-of-factly and as a sign of the times rather than as a condition that was undesirable however unavoidable it may have been during a particular period of history. An example of an unrealistic portrayal of women is in relation to their participation in the workforce. Although approximately 41% of the workforce is female, female workers are largely unrepresented in textbooks. When mention is made of women's employment, it is seldom accompanied by any specific reference to the jobs held by women or to the discrimination which is still experienced by large numbers of women workers. Such unrealistic coverage denies both male and female students the information they need to understand current forces for women's equity and to make decisions regarding their own lives.

Fragmentation/Isolation

Bias through fragmentation exists when content regarding minority groups or women is physically or visually isolated or delivered only in separate chapters or paragraphs tacked on to the end of a chapter. Women and minorities may also be depicted as interacting only with persons like themselves, never affecting the dominant culture. This isolation and fragmentation implies that these groups are less important and not of value to the predominant culture. An example of fragmentation would be putting boxes on the side of a page to "highlight" Ten Famous Women.

Linguistic Bias

Biased language in instructional materials reflects the discriminatory nature of English verbal communication. Language usage and vocabulary are important conveyors of a society's prevailing value system. Linguist Benjamin Whorf has pointed out that language is more than a reflection of the structural arrangements in a society, it is intimately linked to the creation and perception of reality itself.[5] Use of unequal terms for the two sexes, consistent positioning of one sex before the other, labels which degrade or denigrate, even the assumption that "one" is always "he" are all devices which denote that one sex has more worth than another.

[5]Houghton Mifflin Company, Avoiding Stereotypes, Boston, Mass.: 1975, p.1.

PART II

GUIDELINES FOR ELIMINATING SEX BIAS IN EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

The forms of bias discussed previously provide a framework for the publishing company's guidelines for the elimination of sex bias in materials. Each one of the guidelines provides a solution for a particular form of bias and offers an alternative way of writing that is sex fair. In evaluating existing materials, the emphasis should be placed on what can be in the future, rather than the negatives that still exist. "Reality" itself is subject to slanted interpretations.[6] The fact that women do not yet hold a proportionate share of executive positions should not prevent us from depicting a sizable number of women as executives. Realistically, persons from any group can sometimes be stupid, make mistakes, ask for help, but no one group of people should have a corner on negative attributes. The portrayal of women in textbooks and educational materials should reflect the changing role of women in our society and not perpetuate the sex-role stereotyping that has been so prevalent in textbooks in the past.

The following guidelines are intended to serve as a tool for a textbook advisory committees and others who have input into the process of selecting textbooks and educational materials for use in a school district. Using the concepts and ideas presented in the guidelines, textbook selection committees should be able to compare the contents of textbooks proposed for purchase with the guidelines that explain what the characteristics of a non-sexist textbook are. A lot of time and energy can be saved later if the consideration of sexism is made a part of initial textbook selection. These guidelines can also be used by teachers and other school personnel to analyze the texts and materials that are currently being used. If the analysis reveals sexism, alternatives for the use of these materials should be examined. Textbook selection committees should consider discontinuing the use of sexist materials. (Strategies for using sexist materials in a way that offsets their influence are discussed in Part III.)

The following guidelines, used with permission, are from the Macmillan Publishing Company's Guidelines for Creating Positive Sexual and Racial Images in Educational Materials, copyright 1975. The general content guidelines, language-usage guidelines, and information on avoiding sex stereotypes in art are reprinted in full. Material from the subject - area guidelines has been adapted for use in this publication.

GENERAL CONTENT GUIDELINES

THE INVISIBLE WOMEN

> "Today's farmer is a very different person from the westward-moving frontiersman whose fortunes you have followed across the continent."

Wars have been fought, our continent has been settled, lifestyles have been transformed dramatically within decades, civilizations have been built, and cultures have died. In textbook accounts of these events, where is the woman? Was she not also a "westward-moving frontier person?" Women have existed as long as men, with all the endowments of the human species, including intelligence, resourcefulness, and influence. Yet when women are mentioned at all, it is as the "other one," the "opposite" of man - therefore the sex that does not share in the significant struggles and achievements of the human species. Existing textbooks say, in effect, that men made history while women - or rather the mothers, sisters, daughters, and wives of men - watched, helped out occasionally, and periodically changed their fashions and

[6]Macmillan, op.cit.p.4.

hairstyles. The positive, active roles enacted by women throughout history should be researched thoroughly and incorporated into classroom materials.

Western culture tends to emphasize values that are considered masculine - such as physical courage, power, conquest, acquistion of property, and production of goods; and textbooks tend to portray human events arising from such values. Many women have participated actively in such events (as leaders, scientists, athletes, etc.) and should be mentioned when possible in textbooks. However, if our materials focus too heavily on those traditionally-honored endeavors, the balance still tends to favor males.

Another aspect of human development, one that is usually minimized, is the so-called "feminine" aspect, including compassion, gentleness, expressiveness and conservation of life. Current public issues such as ecology, population control, hunger, disarmament, race relations, unemployment, and crime are making people question just what areas of achievement are truly valuable to society. It is becoming increasingly obvious that so-called "feminine" values of emotion and behavior should be cultivated in all children, regardless of sex, and given the priority they deserve in our classroom materials. Neither sex has a monopoly on humanism.

Guidepost

Women and girls must be made visible in our history and throughout modern culture. Our books should reflect current trends in rethinking our priorities and values - including the idea that the suppression of any group of people, such as women, threatens the well-being of the entire human species.

THE 51% MINORITY

More than one-half of the population is female; yet a visitor from another planet, after examining most texts and readers, might assume that males outnumber females by at least ten to one.

Guidepost

In selecting authors, illustrators, and the content of artwork, stories, poetry, non-fiction accounts, and examples, remember that half of the human population is female and should be represented appropriately in our textbooks.

WOMAN ON A PEDESTAL/MAN THE SURVIVOR

"The Fair Sex": guardians of morality . . . peace loving . . . above material concerns . . . compassionate . . . nurturers . . . self-sacrificing . . . . modest . . . pure . . . innocent . . . self-effacing. "Little girls don't fight." "Little girls are sweet."

"The Strong Sex": the conquerers . . . doers . . . builders . . . logical . . tough . . . enterprising . . . realistic . . . competitive . . . self-confident . . . self-reliant . . . bold . . . wise. "Little boys should fight their own battles." "You can't expect little boys to be nice." "Little boys are adventurous."

The romantic image of ideal womanhood has been so overplayed that most girls grow up believing they must attain it to be acceptable as women. Binding young women with such demands can cripple them as severely as did binding their feet in old China.

If girls are to develop the abilities required for space-age survival, they must embrace "masculine" virtues as well, and it is unfortunate that those who do so have been chided for rejecting "lady-like" values associated with their own sex. Studies have shown that many intelligent young women have been programmed to experience severe anxiety over success, and unconsciously or even consciously are inclined to sabotage themselves academically in an attempt to appear "feminine." Our textbooks should provide role models encouraging girls to develop the success-oriented attitudes needed by a modern world whose women must prove every bit as self-reliant as its men.

Boys suffer, too, from unrealistic sex-stereotyped expectations. Programmed to "masculine" ideals, they are pressured and ridiculed into rejecting "feminine" values. The virtues attributed to ideal women are not to be minimized for either sex, but deserve to be expanded beyond woman's "special domain." Mature human beings of either sex are "strong enough to be gentle" and our textbooks can encourage this by "de-sexing" desirable human attributes.

Guidepost

Do not attribute specific traits or values to a sex. Seek out main characters and figures in history who embody a range of human potential: a rugged woodsman can care for an orphaned animal; a woman can win an important election and display love for her children; a mild-mannered man can act bravely.

THE "CHEERLEADER" SYNDROME

Girls watch boys build a treehouse, reward their big brothers with smiles when they solve a mystery; a mother stands at the kitchen door wiping her hands on an apron while father rescues a treed cat; women urge their husbands on to greater achievements and allow males to take credit for their ideas.

These prevalent images reinforce the notion of woman as passive onlooker, giver-of-support, and non-achiever. Such images act as a straitjacket to females and a painful hairshirt to males who suffer from constant pressure to prove themselves.

Guidepost

Emphasis should be placed frequently on portrayals of girls and women participating actively and positively in exciting, worthwhile pursuits, while males should be permitted often to observe and lend support.

"MOTHER'S PLACE IS IN THE KITCHEN"

"The men caught the fish; their wives cooked them."
"Judy helped her mother set the table."
"When doing the laundry, a housewife should use biodegradable detergents."

Even in hypothetical examples, the assumption is that only women do the household chores, and that is all they ever do. The stereotyped mother is always in the kitchen, unless she is sewing, making the beds, or shopping. In real life, more than 40% of all married women now work outside the home. Fathers share in the shopping, cooking, cleaning up, and child care. Eighty percent of the women who work outside the home do so because they or their families need the money, and because they have skills and training needed in the working world. Therefore

we should not imply that women's employment is: supplemental ("She worked for pin money."), amazing ("She actually has her own business!"), unfortunate ("Her family must have suffered."), or a special privilege ("Her husband allowed her to work."). On the other hand, the value of work within the home should not be discounted ("My wife doesn't work." "I'm only a housewife." "He was stuck with the cooking."). A recent study by the Chase Manhattan Bank estimates that services performed by the average housewife would amount to $8,285.68 in annual wages. Household tasks should not be singled out for glorification when depicted as "the woman's role" ("Homemaking is the true vocation for a woman.") or degraded in relation to "real" (moneyearning) work, but such tasks can be recognized as an essential part of everyday life increasingly shared by both sexes. This position should be extended to our portrayal of children's activities, away from the stereotyped image of girls helping their mothers with household chores.

Guidepost

Show some mothers as having outside employment. When at home, show them participating in a variety of activities-reading the paper, paying bills, building shelves. Show some boys and men sharing in domestic chores on a regular basis.

"FRAGILE WOMANHOOD"

> "Mother said, 'I can't get Mike. I will get Daddy. Daddy can go up the tree. He will get Mike down.'"
> "Their guide from here on was an amazing Shoshoni Indian woman, Sacajawea.... Promised her freedom as a reward for getting the party through the Rockies, she did just that, with a young baby strapped to her back."

It is a myth that women are fragile. In real life, some women frequently climb ladders, carry heavy weights, perform rescue operations, split logs for the fireplace, drive cars and trucks, and otherwise belie the stereotype of female weakness. Also, despite popular images, women and girls are not naturally reduced to quivers at the sight of bugs and snakes, or in need of male protection in all challenging circumstances. Children are sometimes weak and uncertain when learning a new skill or facing a difficult situation, but this should bear no relationship to their sex.

The passage about Sacajawea is a more subtle example of how the myth of feminine fragility is reinforced. The book from which it was taken abounds with stories of male guides, explorers, and other rugged heroes who toted many a heavy load. Sacajawea was the only person of this ilk described as "amazing." Why? The implication is that only a very unusual woman would possess the courage and stamina to perform a feat commonplace for male guides during that time in history.

Guidepost

Show women and girls as strong, enterprising, competent, and courageous as often as you do males. Allow males to be occasionally selfdoubting, in need of reassurance and support.

"THE EMOTIONAL SEX"

> "I'm scared," said Susan, clutching her brother's hand. She began to sob uncontrollably.
> "That love stuff is for girls," said Jerry to his friend as they left the movie theater.

Once in a great while, traditional textbooks show little boys on the verge of tears, but they nearly always manage to choke them back bravely. Girls in such books, on the other hand, usually surrender to their fears and dislikes, to the point where they seldom take positive action. In this way, girls are used as a kind of foil to highlight male achievements. Thus girls are programmed to feel that "feminine" emotional weakness is desirable because it helps males build their self-esteem and, in turn, will spur males to solve all of life's problems. This attitude cripples males, too: they are learning contempt for females and an exaggerated image of masculine strength impossible to fulfill. They are being taught to be dishonest about their own feelings and to deny their expression. Boys and girls are further learning to be less than whole human beings when we reinforce the notion that tender emotions, such as love, sympathy, and caring, are acceptable only for one sex.

Guidepost

Boys as well as girls, women as well as men, should cry or otherwise respond emotionally when appropriate. They may also exhibit self-control and emotional courage in trying circumstances, especially when such restraint enables them to act positively.

CAN WOMEN DO MEN'S WORK?

> "That's a man's job." "Women aren't aggressive enough to be executives." "Women can't make hard decisions, they are too soft."
> All hypothetical examples of working people in a textbook are male, except typists, teachers, and nurses. The girls play with dolls, the boys build rockets, ride bicycles, form clubs, play sports, solve problems.

It is a fact that women have contributed significantly in male-dominated fields: business and industry, education, politics, the sciences, sports, and the arts. Many have achieved positions of leadership, and increasing numbers of women are gaining public office. True, the majority of women thus far have functioned in roles often assigned to them by males. But it should be noted that these roles include virtually every kind of labor known to males: heavy farming, construction, fighting, hunting, analytic work, and other physically and mentally taxing jobs. During the Victorian Age, it suited males to confine women, at least those of the upper classes, to an ornamental role as swooning ladies. During the World Wars women were needed to fill men's jobs, and magically lost their "natural delicacy."

Today, women represent a very substantial part of the labor force. Well over half of all American women between ages 18 and 64 now work outside the home, and they are active in all major industries and professions. Our textbooks should reflect these realities in depicting adults at work and children at play.

Guidepost

Represent women in all professions and phases of employment, including positions of leadership. Show young girls at play that develops the necessary skills for eventual employment: vigorous physical games, building, inventing, and problem-solving.

"THE PERFECT FAMILY"

> Father . . . Mother . . . Big Brother . . . Little Sister . . . Dog . . . Cat . . . House . . . Car

Contrary to what many textbooks would have us believe, many families do not follow the above pattern, and children should not be given the impression that such a family constellation is necessarily the ideal. Not only are there obvious variations such as older sisters, one child, or children all of one sex; but a growing number of "acceptable" families have only one parent (of either sex). Also, we should not omit single adults, who, if we were to judge from textbooks, simply do not exist. Nowadays single adults of either sex can adopt children. It is unrealistic and unfair to imply that all one-parent homes are "broken" homes.

Guidepost

Show a realistic variety of family clusters: children of only one sex in some families, older sisters, one child, one parent, extended families, single adults.

TALKING DOWN TO WOMEN

"Pretty good for a girl." "Little girls always give up." "Despite the fact that she was a woman, she had a logical mind." "I'll ask my girl to schedule the meeting."

"The Suffragettes, wearing bloomers and big hats, swaggered past the White House carrying placards in an attempt to seize the vote.

Blatantly anti-female statements exist in many traditional textbooks. As girls are included in more and more activities valued by males, and as males discover satisfaction in so-called women's work, it should not be difficult to support and encourage all human endeavors by both sexes. We must avoid left-handed compliments, such as "You can run as fast as a boy," and polite, mocking afterthoughts, such as "And, of course, we can't forget to thank the girls for the cookies they baked for the team." In stories and descriptive texts, a patronizing tone towards women and women's issues, such as suffrage and the temperance movement, is betrayed by treating them as "amusing sidelines" and by focusing on such images as the fashions and hairstyles of these serious, courageous crusaders.

Guidepost

Whenever you need to test a statement to see if it is offensive or patronizing to women, try substituting "he" in place of "she." Unflattering comparisons between the sexes should be avoided, as well as generalizations about the abilities of either sex.

WOMEN AS APPENDAGES OF MEN

"Man and wife." "A man and his family." "Old maids." "Spinisters."

"And now I present Mrs. Mary Jones, wife of John Jones, and mother of five children, who will give her report on the local educational system."

Women must be treated as men are--as worthwhile individuals in their own right. Their achievements should not be qualified by their gender or marital status. You would not say, "Mr. Jones, husband of Mary Jones, and father of five children, will speak to you" (unless he is speaking on his experiences as a father). Women who do not "belong" either as a wife or a mother have traditionally been ignored or maligned by pejorative phrases such as "old maid," "spinister," "lonely career woman."

Single persons of either sex are all too often described as living a life without emotional ties to other human beings and are treated with pity or suspicion.

Guidepost

Unless you are discussing experiences specially related to marriage and children, it is usually more appropriate to describe men and women apart from marital status.

WOMEN'S INFERIOR STATUS—CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

"The wives were not permitted to vote because the chairman felt they would, in effect, give their husbands a double vote for the same candidate."

"Colonial women were not allowed to own property."

"Cortez received an Indian girl as a present."

Statements such as the above that describe past sexism should be amplified by an explanation of the customs, discriminations, and economics involved. This should include the historical forces that created the inequality, the changes occurring today to ameliorate the situation, and the need for continued efforts to make equal opportunity a reality for women. When discussing male-dominated cultures, try to include specific statements about the suppression of women, and describe the contribution--however submerged--of women within the culture. Sexist statements and events might be included in stories and quotations, but should be cited as examples of attitudes no longer acceptable in our culture.

Guidepost

Sexist behavior and customs must not be accepted as "givens" but must be explained in the context of the culture and point in history. These explanations should appear in the student's materials, although they might be further amplified in the teacher's editions.

"EVERYONE IS AN AUTHORITY ON WOMEN"-EXCEPT WOMEN

"Men of science say that women. . . "

"Women can, of course, be educated, but their minds are not adapted to the higher sciences, philosophy, or certain of the arts."

Hegel

Male scientists hold forth on hormonal differences, male poets extol woman's "eternal nature," male philosophers set forth woman's "proper domain," male psychiatrists describe "healthy feminine attitudes." Rarely are women quoted as authorities on their own sex; even more rarely are women credited with knowledge unrelated to their sex. Women in history and current events must voice their own concerns in our textbooks. Women wrote volumes during the suffrage movement--not only on the vote, but also on broad political issues concerning women--and these should be quoted. Also available are a wide range of materials created by women writers, artists, historians, musicians, philosophers, and feminist thinkers. Women have spoken, and should be heard, in all areas of human concern.

Guidepost

Make a serious, continuing effort to have women speak for themselves. Represent women in materials reflecting human progress and creativity.

"WOMEN AS A SPECIAL PROBLEM" - TOKENISM

A Social studies book is written from the usual male point of view, but a paragraph describes Women's Liberation in the 1970's.

The subject of women's rights appears only at the point in history when it became a problem for men.

A book describes two elections: one for mayor, with all male candidates; one for a classroom representative to plan a party, with a female victor.

To avoid tokenism, we should incorporate women into the mainstream of history and modern culture, not merely add them as afterthoughts. Issues concerning women should be discussed from the perspective of women, not merely in relation to the male establishment. The struggle for suffrage began fifty years before women won the vote and raised significant questions about women's status in society that extended far beyond the question of voting. This fact should be emphasized. We should be especially careful to avoid juxtaposing significant male events (the election of a male mayor) with relatively trivial examples involving females (planning a party). Equal treatment in classroom materials is not a "numbers game"' it should involve above all else an even-handedness in terms of substance and importance.

Guidepost

Depict women in all walks of life, making them an integral part of our history, current events, and everyday activities.

SEXISM - LANGUAGE USAGE GUIDELINES

LANGUAGE ALSO REFLECTS SEX BIAS

The English language makes it extremely difficult to use phrases that are both grammatically acceptable and non-sexist. However, certain solutions have already gained acceptance, and new ones will be devised as our society becomes more sensitive to the need for viewing women as equal with men. Some recommended words and phrases may sound awkward at first, but remember that female readers will no longer wonder if they are subtly excluded from most human endeavors.

	TRY TO AVOID	SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES
"Man:" The supposedly generic use of this word implies that all of culture and civilization is the province of the male sex.	Man, mankind, men (unless the group is specified as all-male)	human, human beings, person(s), people, individuals, humanity, men and women, women and men, figures, personalities.
	The Rise of Man	The Rise of Civilization The Rise of Cultures The Rise of Humanity
	Great Men in History	Great Figures in History People Who Made History

	TRY TO AVOID	SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES
	man's achievements	human achievements
	Cro-Magnon man	Cro-Magnons, Cro-Magnon people
Pronouns: The use of the masculine pronoun for hypothetical examples omits females, whether or not this is intended. The converse is true when feminine pronouns are used to describe activity assumed to be female.	The prairie farmer was concerned about the price of his wheat.	Prairie farmers were concerned about the price of wheat.
	Each citizen must pay his taxes.	All citizens must pay taxes. Every citizen must pay taxes.
	The conscientious housekeeper dusts her furniture at least once a week.	The conscientious housekeeper dusts the furnitute at least once a week.
	A good nurse cares about her patients' feelings.	Good nurses care about their patients' feelings.
	The horse shook his mane.	The colt (stallion, gelding) shook his mane. The horse shook its mane.
Animals should be "it" unless the sex is specified.	The cat washed herself.	The mother cat washed herself. The cat washed itself.
"The Average Man:" Hypothetical and illustrative examples should include both sexes unless a group has been specifically defined as comprising only one sex.	The average working man saw his paycheck eaten up by inflation.	The average worker's paycheck was eaten up by inflation.
	A typical miner spent ___% of his life underground.	Only males were hired to work in the mines. A typical miner spent ___ % of his life underground.
	The man on the street	The average person
	If a man can drive 360 miles in 6 hours, then	If a person can drive . . . (or have a balance: "If a woman can drive . . ." and on the same page "If a man can buy six oranges for 79¢, then . . .")
Strong Men/Feeble Women: Do not glorify male exploits while ignoring those of females, or juxtapose trivial events about women with momentous male achievements.	Daring frontiersmen fought their way ever westward, encouraged by their patient wives.	Daring men and women fought against all obstacles as they pushed our country's frontier ever westward.

	TRY TO AVOID	SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES
	Abigail Adams was influential in the social life of the capital during her husband's presidency.	Abigail Adams was a colorful writer; today her writings are studied with admiration by those seeking an understanding of the early days of the United States of America.
Women as Baggage: Be careful to avoid language that submerges a woman's identity with that of her husband, father, or son, or that implies that women are passive	The American colonists brought their wives and children to the New World.	American colonist families came to the New World.
	Women were given the vote after the First World War.	Women won the vote after the First World War.
	George Smith married the daughter of John Jones, a rich banker.	George Smith, son of a factory worker, married Brenda Jones, daughter of a rich banker.
	Man and wife	Husband and wife
	Mrs. John Jones	Susan Jones, Ms. Susan Jones, or Mrs. Susan Jones. The trend today is to use whichever title (Ms., Miss or Mrs.) a woman prefers and to use Ms. or no title when the preference is unknown. This custom is still in flux. However, we do feel that textbooks for young people should not identify women by their marital status or their husband's name alone.
	John Jones took his wife to California to look for a new house.	John and Susan Jones went to California to look for a new house.
Lady Poets and Women Athletes: Sex differentiation is rarely important in the context of a person's work unless you are discussing sex discrimination, or unless a specific situation in the text makes the person's sex relevant.	sculptress	sculptor
	lady or female doctor, scientist, athlete	doctor, scientist, athlete
	suffragette	suffragist
	co-ed	student
	male nurse	nurse

Sex-Neutral Terms: We must strive to revise terms using "man" exclusively. Such revisions are usually easier than you might expect.

TRY TO AVOID	SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES
the working man	the worker
businessman	business person, entrepreneur, manager, speculator, investor, group leader, trader, business leader
one-man band one-man show	"man" okay if it is a man; if a woman, say "one-woman show", if not specified, say "one person show, solo performance, or individual exhibit."
salesman	salesperson, seller, sales representative
insurance man	insurance agent
repairman	repairer, technician
lineman	line installer
postman, mailman	mail carrier
fireman	fire fighter
showman	performer
spokesman	representative, spokesperson
chairman	"man" okay if it is a man; if a woman, say "chairwoman," otherwise if not specified use "chairperson, moderator, leader, group leader, or chair."
manpower	human energy
forefathers	precursors, ancestors, founders
brotherhood	amity, unity, community
middleman	go-between, wholesalers, importer, agent
cameraman	photographer, camera operator, camera technician
manmade	manufactured, simulated, synthetic, hand-built, handmade, machinemade
foreman	supervisor

Sexist Phrases: The following common statements and phrases are sexist and should not appear in our books:

Girls (when referring to females over the age of eighteen . . . If you're uncomfortable calling someone in her early 20's a "woman," try the term "young woman.")

Sissy

Filly (unless you are talking about a female horse)

Tomboy

You're as smart as a man, as strong as a man

Women can't . . . (unless you are referring to the male part of the sex act or growing beards)

Girls can't

He was as weak as a girl

Girls are sugar and spice and everything nice

That was a manly act of courage

He took it like a man

Separate the men from the boys (unless it is an all-male situation)

Man the sailboat

Ball-and chain (referring to a wife)

He acted like a woman

Note: The term "lady" (except when referring to the British title) is becoming increasingly distasteful to modern women because it connotes stereotyped "lady-like" behavior. Therefore, we recommend using "woman" and "women" instead of "lady" and "ladies."

Exceptions: Certain words cannot at this time be changed to sex-neutral terms because the words have legal meaning. They include:

testatrix (female); testator (male)
executrix (female); executor (male)

AVOIDING SEX STEREOTYPES IN ART

Because of their powerful impact on children, visual images provide one of our strongest opportunities to present an unbiased view of people in our text materials. In addition to the points made earlier and the examples that follow, these major guides should be kept in mind:

Maintain a 50-50 balance between the sexes—numerically and in terms of the significance and prominence of the activity illustrated. This balance should occur in individual texts as well as over an entire series, and in each type of illustration. For example, balance is not achieved by having photos that are predominately male in the same book with line drawings that are predominately female. Art for every cover must be balanced.

Illustration style should bear no relationship to gender. Artists tend to portray girls in pastel tones, soft lines, fuzzy definitions, and flowery embellishments. Rough art approved for its treatment of girls may become unacceptable in final form by the addition of makeup, ribbons, bows, lace, other frills, and softness. Mood contrasts in illustration are, of course, acceptable, but should reflect the feeling of the story, not sex differences. Just as many drawings of girls as of boys should employ bold lines, strong colors, and other suggestions of certainty and strength.

Illustrations should include all physical types and occasional evidence of physical handicaps, avoiding stereotyped associations with these images. People should be thin, fat, "average," tall, short, etc., some wearing glasses, an occasional hearing aid, crutches, in a wheelchair, using deaf sign language. Stereotypes include ugly villains, handsome heroes, skinny geniuses wearing glasses, which, while not always objectionable, do not portray people realistically when used often.

The Manufacturing Department has the obligation of insisting that their suppliers meet the standards set forth in these Guidelines.

The drawings and photographs in our texts must reflect the changes in editorial content as described in the foregoing guidelines. Remember that more than half of our audience is female.

	STEREOTYPED IMAGES	SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES
Mother's Role: Don't always show mothers doing housework, cooking, and shopping. Reflect the fact that many mothers are involved in work outside the home and do "non-role" tasks at home, such as writing, building, and tending the lawn.	Mothers and other females always wearing aprons	Males and/or females in aprons when appropriate to the story
	Mother sewing while Dad reads	Mother working at her desk while Dad reads or clears the dining room table
	Mother bringing sandwiches to Dad as he fixes the roof	Mother fixing the roof, building a cabinet
	Mother running vacuum cleaner, working at stove, doing wash, carrying food	Father doing household chores independently of, or with, Mother

	STEREOTYPED IMAGES	SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES
Mother's Role: (continued)	Mother seeing Father off to work	Mother leaving for work carrying briefcase, portfolio, or tools
	Father always driving car on family outings	Mother driving the car much of the time
	Only the father taking children on fun, adventurous outings	Mother, or both parents, taking children to circus, on camping trips, boating, to sporting events, etc.
	Only the mother giving comfort, sympathy, hugs, kisses, hot milk at bedtime	Father being demonstrative and supportive, tending sick child, bandaging hurt knee, etc.
	Only the mother doing the shopping	Father shopping much of the time
	Mother showing shock, horror, fear, exclaiming	Father and mother showing unguarded facial expressions when appropriate to the story
	Father expressionless or relaxed-looking in trying circumstances	Sometimes showing the mother more composed
Passive Gestures and Expressions: The cheerleader syndrome creeps into illustrations when girls are shown in restrictive roles or outside the action	Females backing off from the center of action, with males placed more forward (girl recoiling from snake, boy peering down curiously at it)	Both sexes participating, with males sometimes in the background (both sexes close to the snake, with perhaps a girl reaching towards it)
	Boys playing ball, girls watching	Both sexes playing ball; sometimes boys watching a girls' team play
	Females wringing their hands, fluttering, covering their faces, mouths, using warding-off gestures, off-balance poses, and shrinking-back motions, hunched shoulders, lowered head, downcast eyes, looking as if they are saying "Oh!"	Both sexes using strong, positive gestures expressing confidence and readiness to act; arms frequently outstretched, open, ready to explore, receive, and react. When required for story line, either sex and/or both may express doubt, fear, imbalance-but not only the females

	STEREOTYPED IMAGES	SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES
Passive Gestures and Expressions: (continued)	Females using coy, flirtatous gestures: tilted heads, little shrugs, playing with hair, fingering dress	Females, like males, should usually be direct in pose and manner. (Either sex appears somewhat coy when feeling guilty or asking a favor.)
	Females usually sitting	Most children are active and rarely sit unless forced to; both sexes should be equally active
Pink Bows and Pinafores: Identifying girls by their clothing is a lazy way of differentiating the sexes and is inaccurate. Dress has long been used to reinforce sex bias. In many instances, sex differentiation is simply not important.	Girls playing in dresses or always wearing them to school	Girls should be shown wearing appropriate play clothing: jeans, shorts, slacks, sport shirts, T-shirts; school clothing neat but not always dresses (most schools now allow girls to wear pants)
	Girls wearing "cute" frills, too many ribbons, jewelry	Show healthy, active children—not ornaments—likely to sport dirt splotches and have their ponytails fastened with rubber bands. Girls and boys can both appear dressed up in party situations.
	Females preoccupied with own appearance more than males are; mother at vanity table; girls only playing dress-up, buying clothes	Both sexes can have moderate concern for appearance, preen in front of mirror; fathers now use blow-driers and hair sprays. Teenage boys cultivate beards; both sexes occasionally buy clothes and try on adult clothing for fun.
	Pink for girl babies; blue for boys	Avoid these colors, or use both together in nurseries, on cribs, baby carriages, clothing, etc.
	Mother always in dresses	Show mothers in slacks, work clothes, wearing dresses and pantsuits to work and social events.

	STEREOTYPED IMAGES	SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES
Indoors With Her Dolls: Avoid the environments and standard props used to separate the activities of the sexes.	Girls surrounded by dolls, baby carriages, kitchen equipment	Girls and boys amid varied objects: basement workroom, tools, chemistry sets, nature collections, books, fishing rods, musical instruments—and dolls
	Girls mostly indoors or hovering near doorways, sheltered from the elements, carrying umbrellas when boys are not	Both sexes indoors and out; at play most prefer to be out. Include girls in scenes of exploring a new neighborhood, peeking into boats in a harbor, playing in the rain, in a snowball fight, getting dirty
Women in History: Search for photos and illustrations that show females taking the lead.	Pioneer women always cooking, sweeping, spinning wool, rocking babies	Chopping wood, using a plough, carrying bundles of hay, using firearms, helping build a cabin, handling large animals
	Pioneer woman riding in covered wagon as husband walks	Both walking or both riding, or one walking while the other drives
	Lady of the manor doing needlepoint	Titled lady riding horseback on estate checking up on crops, issuing orders, signing papers
Modern Women: Again search for action pictures, depict the wide range of careers held by women and active roles in leisuretime activities.	Women selling cakes at a fair	Women displaying their artwork or prize animals at a fair
	Women as passengers on a sailboat; women sipping hot chocolate in a ski lodge	Women hoisting the sails on a boat, participating in a ski race
	Women always depicted in sex-typed jobs: nurses, elementary-school teachers, clerks, secretaries, tellers, librarians	Depict women as doctors, professors, managers, sitting in private office with a window and carpet; women police officers, sports figures, construction workers. Show some men in the lower-paid jobs, including nursing, office clerks, waiting on tables in coffee shops. Show men as elementary school teachers.

What about real-life events where women really were in a passive role? History is replete with instances where women were treated as second-class citizens; current events, too, reflect this lingering bias. We want to depict these facts clearly in our illustrations. Here is where captions are vital, for they should point out the injustice behind the condition being illustrated. Example: Picture of men lined up to vote: "The right to participate in the electoral process was restricted to men until the success of the women's suffrage movement in 1920."

Whenever possible, captions can be used to emphasize the strengths of women:

Example: two photos, one of a woman alighting from a stagecoach; the other, a foxhunt.

Poor caption: "This guest will probably need a long visit to rest, after an uncomfortable ride. Perhaps she will watch the sport above."

Better caption: "This guest is arriving by stagecoach, the main form of transportation in colonial times. During her visit she may take part in the sport above."

SUBJECT-AREA GUIDELINES/CHARACTERISTICS OF NONSEXIST MATERIALS

The specific subject area guidelines that follow are to heighten awareness of the problems and opportunities regarding women that occur in key classroom subject areas. In evaluating textbooks, it is important to be able to identify characteristics of materials that are nonsexist. Listed below for each subject area are traits of nonsexist materials.

PICTURE BOOKS -

1. The female figure is shown to be equally as competent as the male figure.
2. The female figure is shown as frequently as the male figure.
3. The female and male figures engage equally in activities. Examples: "All the children ran," "All the children washed the dishes."
4. Females are shown in a variety of occupations.
5. Stereotypes of family roles are avoided. Examples: The mother sometimes works outside of the home, while the father works in the home.
6. Female figures are proud and happy to be females.
7. Male figures are shown with emotions appropriate to the situation. Example: Fathers show tenderness toward children.

LANGUAGE ARTS -

Readers:

1. Girls are depicted as often as boys, women as often as men.
2. Females' roles are as varied as male roles.
3. Females face and solve their own problems.
4. Females' accomplishments, not their clothing or features, are emphasized.
5. Derogatory references (tomboy, sissy, old maid) are omitted.
6. Biographies of women (beyond mere tokenism) are included.
7. Males are depicted in a variety of roles and situations.
8. Stories depict animals as neuter, rather than sex-typed.

Anthologies

1. Selections by and about women are included.
2. Biographical headnotes on authors do not imply that women write intuitively while men are conscious artists.
3. Background materials discuss the position of women in the society of the era, attitudes toward women writers, and the social, political, and economic implications of literary conventions regarding women.

4. Discussion of the problem of sexist language in literature is included in student materials.

Language Texts:

1. Stereotyping (such as associating women with the kitchen and men with business)is avoided in introducing vocabulary units.

2. Assumptions about women inherent in the language are discussed. Example: masculine and feminine.

3. Constant listing of the feminine pronoun in a secondary position (such as he and she and he, she, it) is avoided. (An alternative is to list them alphabetically: he/she, her/his.)

SOCIAL STUDIES -

History:

1. The roles of women are treated equally with the roles of men. They are given equal attention and equal importance is attached to them.

2. Women are depicted in a variety of roles.

3. Women in nonstereotyped roles (such as politician and labor leader) are treated sympathetically and seriously, not as laughable oddities.

4. The women's movement is discussed as a serious and continuing struggle, that encompasses many more issues than getting the vote, and did not end when that right was granted.

5. Subsuming terminology (such as "the pioneers and their wives" and "the settlers and their wives and children") which suggests that women were not pioneers and settlers is avoided.

6. The exclusive use of man or men or mankind for people is avoided.

7. Sex-neutral words, such as "Eskimo," "farmer", and "doctor" are followed alternately in sentences with he and she.

8. Families are depicted living and working together in a variety of non-stereotypic ways.

9. The significance of a particular historical event is discussed in relation to its effect on all people, including women and minorities.

10. The contributions of all groups in history is recorded.

Sociology and Psychology:

1. The process of social conditioning is described in such a way as to make it clear that masculine and feminine are socially defined concepts that vary from culture to culture.

2. Non-Freudian studies of female psychology by feminist psychologists and psychiatrists are included.

3. Courses and units on marriage and the family should be expanded to present a variety of lifestyles (such as single adult living).

4. Courses and units on human development stress individual growth, not adjustment to a statistical norm.

5. Divorce, illegitimacy, juvenile delinquency and prostitution are treated as problems of the whole society. It is not suggested that these are problems created or increased by the emancipation of women.

6. The text indicates that a division of labor based on physical differences ceases to be essential in an automated, mechanized society.

Economics:

1. Information on women in the labor market is included.

2. The problem of sex discrimination is discussed.

3. The subject of women and property laws, and the effect of marriage on a woman's property rights, is discussed.

4. Woman is examined as a consumer, including methods of manipulation by the media.

5. The positions of women under different economic systems are examined.

6. Sex stereotyping (such as having women concern themselves with the household budget and men with the stock market) is avoided.

Political Science:

1. The legal status of women is discussed.

2. The under-representation of women in all levels of government is discussed.

3. Government and policy-making are treated as appropriate vocations for both men and women.

Arithmetic and Mathematics:

1. Examples are drawn from all aspects of life. Boys and girls depicted in examples should not be sex stereotypes (e.g., boys as well as girls should bake cookies and girls as well as boys should build club houses).

2. The number of times that males and females are used in math examples is approximately equal.

3. Suggestions that women are incompetent in mathematics (such as "Jane's way" and "John's way" to depict the long and short method, the wrong and right way, are avoided.

HOME ECONOMICS/INDUSTRIAL ARTS

1. All areas of practical information for personal survival (from cooking and sewing to the use of simple tools and auto repair) are described to facilitate the movement away from sex-segregated courses.

2. Men and women are treated as having the same potential responsibilities and capabilities in household matters. The option of shared responsibility between the sexes is emphasized, as well as occasional switching of traditional roles.

3. Treatment is given to the selection, making and care of men's clothing, and a discussion of the history of male dress is included.

4. Males are given equal time in discussions of grooming and cosmetics. Stereotyped ideas of beauty in terms of "ideal" physical characteristics should not be emphasized. Attention should be focused on what is healthy for the individual.

5. Suggestions that certain kinds of work are for women, others for men, are avoided.

6. Courses on marriage and the family include discussions of options that are opening up in living arrangements, group households, extended families, single-parent families, etc. The changing roles of men and women are discussed. No particular type of lifestyle is advocated, materials are written in an informative, impartial way.

FINE ARTS

1. Achievements of women and men are discussed with equal attention and seriousness, and research is encouraged.

2. The text does not suggest that participation in certain of the arts indicates sexual abnormality (such as the ballet for men).

3. Artistic conventions regarding women are discussed.

4. Discussions do not suggest that women excelling in the arts do so because they are naturally more subjective and intuitive and, therefore, artistic in some respects.

5. Art history texts discuss domestic crafts as important contributions.

SEX EDUCATION

1. Depending on the age level, the text includes some or all of the following subjects:

   -equality as the necessary basis for a love relationship
   -the social and political implications of the double standard
   -sex, reproduction and parental responsibility
   -birth control methods and reliability
   -a definition of sexuality in non-Freudian, nonstereotyped terms.

NATURAL AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES

1. The discoveries and achievements of women are discussed with equal seriousness and attention as those of men. Example: Madam Curie is shown as someone more than her husband's assistant.

2. Problems and/or discussion questions avoid sex stereotyping, and illustrations show girls working out science problems as often as boys.

3. In discussions of the practical applications of science, women are included as beneficiaries of the discovery and are represented at least 50% of the time.

4. Non-sexist language is used in texts. Generalizations about mankind are not phrased "man . . he." A study of the human body is not called "The Biology of Man".

5. Discussions of human physiology are not coupled with behavioral stereotypes. Male characteristics do not include aggressive behavior, female characteristics do not include docile response.

GRAMMAR, COMPOSITION, AND SPELLING

1. Sentences used in language arts texts to illustrate ideas in grammer and usage include girls and women as examples and do not convey sex-role stereotyping. E.g. not always: Mother sewed up the torn seam. But also: Bill mended the seam in his pants.

2. Literary selections that appear as models in grammar and composition texts have girl/boy balance and use "girl" selections in which the female characters are effective, interesting, and engaged in activities as exciting as those of the boys.

3. Displays of sample business and social letters provide a means of demonstrating the changing role of women. E.g. a business letter may be from a woman executive or a girl may write to a camping supply outfit for information.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

1. Females appear in examples, drills, and exercises as frequently as males; stereotyped roles are avoided and an equal variety of activities for both sexes is presented.

2. In dialogue material, female characters appear in central, non-stereotyped roles as frequently as male characters, and are not subordinate to male characters.

3. Literary selections which show women in weak or non-existent roles are avoided. Women are featured in strong and/or central roles, with a balance of selections that feature men in similar roles.

4. Works written by female authors are included.

MUSIC

1. Illustrations do not divide singing groups into boys and girls when picturing children under the ages of 9-10.

2. All types of instruments are played by members of both sexes. Conductors are women as well as men.

3. Women are represented as composers and performers of contemporary "folk" music. Special attention is given to the roles of all people in developing music.

4. Bias does exist in the language of many songs. If a song has lyrics that reinforce stereotypes but is so important historically and musically that it must be included in the course then a) the lyrics might be modified within the spirit of the song and/or b) the stereotypes are explained in the text and discussed afterward.

Adapted from Pennsylvania Department of Education, Self-Study Guide to Sexism in Schools and Macmillan, Guidelines for Creating Postive Sexual and Racial Images in Educational Materials.

CHECKLIST FOR ANALYZING AN ELEMENTARY READER

It is often helpful, particularly when evaluating elementary textbooks, to follow a checklist of criteria which determine whether a book is sexist. The following checklist is one that has often been used for elementary textbooks. It is an effective checklist because it requires an examination of the concepts covered in the text and does not merely ask for the number of boys and girls in an illustration or a story. Often a great disparity in the number of girls and boys pictured does reflect sex bias in the book. However, it is important to look beyond the numbers to how the boys and girls are portrayed.

Yes	No	
___	___	1. All members of the family participate regularly and equally in household chores.
___	___	2. There are favorable presentations of mothers employed outside of the home.
___	___	3. Women working outside of the home hold administrative and/or technical jobs. They are not all teachers, librarians, social workers, nurses or secretaries.
___	___	4. Fathers take an active and competent part in housekeeping and child-rearing and are depicted showing feelings of tenderness.
___	___	5. Girls and boys participate equally in physical activities.
___	___	6. Girls and boys participate equally in intellectual activities.
___	___	7. One-parent families are portrayed, and the portrayal does not suggest that children with a single parent automatically suffer from it.
___	___	8. Male and female characters respect each other as equals.
___	___	9. Girls and boys are both shown to be self-reliant, clever, and brave — capable of facing their own problems and finding their own solutions.
___	___	10. Multiple-parent families (divorced, remarried) are portrayed and the portrayal does not suggest that such family conditions are automatically damaging to the children.
___	___	11. There are no unchallenged derogatory sex stereotyped characterizations, such as "Boys make the best architects," or "Girls are silly."
___	___	12. Both girls and boys are shown as having a wide range of sensibilities, feelings, and responses.
___	___	13. Both girls and boys have a wide variety of career options.
___	___	14. Adults who have chosen not to marry are portrayed favorably.
___	___	15. There are equal numbers of stories with girls and boys as central characters.

Yes	No		
___	___	16.	The male noun or pronoun (mankind, he) is not used to refer to all people.
___	___	17.	Girls' accomplishments, not their clothing or features, are emphasized.
___	___	18.	Clothing and appearance are not used to stereotype characters.
___	___	19.	Non-human characters and their relationships are not personified in sex stereotypes (for example, depicting dogs as masculine, cats as feminine).
___	___	20.	(For readers which incorporate biographies . . .) biographies of women in a variety of roles are included.

Taken from Pennsylvania Department of Education, Self-Study Guide to Sexism in Schools

PART III

HOW TO USE EXISTING MATERIALS

By now, if you have been evaluating the textbooks and educational materials that are used in your school district, you have discovered that many of them are sex-biased. The ideal way to deal with materials that are sexist is to stop using them and to purchase new materials that are non-sexist and begin to use them. This is not realistic for most school districts for two reasons. First, very few school districts can afford to buy all new textbooks and library materials, and often it is not politically expedient for them to do so. Secondly, there still aren't very many good non-sexist textbooks on the market. There is a 2-4 year time lag between the conception of an idea for a new book and its actual appearance on the market. As the awareness of publishers, editors, and authors has increased, more books are being written that present an equal picture of the abilities and opportunities of girls and boys, but these books are not widely available.

Therefore, it is necessary for personnel in school districts to devise constructive ways of using sex biased materials. There are many ways that this can be done, but the basic responsibility for the constructive use of sexist materials rests with the classroom teacher.

Four techniques that can be used to avoid the negative effects of sexism in textbooks are: (1) discussion of inaccuracies and stereotypes in existing materials, (2) provision of supplemental materials, (3) writing your own materials and (4) re-writing existing materials. These strategies can be carried out by committees of teachers, curriculum consultants, and librarians working together; by teachers themselves; and by teachers and students working together in individual classrooms.

Discussion of Inaccuracies and Stereotypes in Existing Materials

As you become more aware of the sexist nature of much of the content of textbooks and educational materials, you can begin to raise the awareness level of your students. On the elementary level, if you are reading a story about a mother who jumps on a chair because she is afraid of a mouse until her son comes in and rescues her, you can ask questions such as: How many of your mothers are afraid of mice? Have you ever seen your mother jump up on a chair? How many of your mothers take care of the animals at your house? Likewise, stories about mothers who stay at home, wear aprons, and do housework all day could elicit questions like: How many of your mothers wear aprons? How many of you have mothers who work outside the home? How many of you have fathers who help with the housework? How many of you live with only one parent? Such questioning helps children to see that the world that is portrayed in textbooks is often an unrealistic one and not at all like the world they live in. As your students become more aware of sex-role stereotypes, they will be able to recognize these stereotypes themselves. They may respond with questions like: Why are the girls in the pictures always watching? Why don't they ever show boys helping with housework? Soon, you can integrate the recognition and discussion of sex-role stereotypes into every lesson. These discussions could serve as a springboard for other lessons dealing with sex-role stereotyping, the changing roles of women and men, and even some consciousness-raising activities in the classroom.

It is important to become knowledgeable about the background of women's issues, experiences, and history. This will enable you to point out the inaccuracies that often exist, particularly in high school history texts. For example, in one widely used history text, Dolly Madison is highlighted as an important figure in the American Revolution, even though she was only eight years old when the Declaration of Independdence was signed. An aware and informed teacher could point out this inaccuracy and follow with discussion of why history books portray or omit women as they do. A thorough knowledge of the contributions of women in all fields will enable teachers to point out

this inaccuracy and follow with discussion of why history books portray or omit women as they do. A thorough knowledge of the contributions of women in all fields will enable teachers to point out existing inaccuracies and to discuss the role of women throughout history and the value of women's contribution.

In considering the use of the great "classics" in literature, work with your students to identify stereotypes in the classic of question. Consider the book in class as literature and discuss the particular significance of the author's bias and its effects on readers. Talk about what is meant by "a great work of art" (the question of universal appeal vs. intrinsic aesthetic value and also who determines each). Supplement your use of "biased classics" with other books that are relatively free of sexual stereotypes.

Provide Supplemental Materials

An examination of existing textbooks often reveals that women are excluded, barely mentioned, or discussed in a discriminatory or stereotypic manner. In order to combat the effects of this portrayal, teachers can provide supplemental materials for classroom use. There are now several good curriculum guides on women in history and women in literature (see resources) that can be used effectively to teach students about what women were and are doing. Supplemental materials can suggest ideas for consciousness-raising, counter-act negative images, and involve students in their own learning about the changing roles of women and men.

Using supplemental materials usually means extra work for the teacher, but the benefit of giving students a fair and realistic picture of the world around them far outweighs the work involved. Care should be taken to integrate the supplemental materials into existing materials and to clarify with the students why the supplemental materials are being used.

In addition to supplemental materials that are available commercially, the school district may decide to form a committee of interested persons to develop new materials that can be used as a supplement.

Writing Your Own Materials

The task of writing non-sexist materials is a challenging and rewarding one. Curriculum coordinators, teachers, and librarians could form a committee to write materials for the school district. These could take the form of curriculum guides for a particular subject area, non-sexist stories to be used as a supplement to traditional readers, or any other form that meets the needs of the teachers in the district.

Teachers can also encourage their students to create original materials. In response to a story about a girl who wants to be a nurse when she grows up and a boy who wants to be a doctor, children can write their own paragraphs about what they want to be when they grow up. Students could also be given assignments to write biographical sketches of women in history or literature and these could be compiled into a booklet for the entire school or for the appropriate grade level.

Re-Writing Existing Materials

Another effective way to lessen the effects of biased materials is to re-write sentences, phrases or paragraphs to correct the bias. This is particularly useful for eliminating language bias. Teachers can re-write passages before a lesson is presented to students, or can ask the students to assist them in re-writing passages that they have identified as being biased. Publishers' guidelines for eliminating bias in educational materials will be particularly helpful in re-writing exercises.

For example, "the farmer and his wife" could be re-written to "the farm couple".

An exercise follows that contains some examples of sexism. It will enable you to practice making decisions about the best way to handle sexism in materials and then to carry through with the decisions.

WRITING AND RE-WRITING EXCERCISE

Many of the suggestions on how to use sexist materials call for us to write our own materials or to re-write sexist passages, sentences, or phrases to make them bias free. It may also be necessary at times to use certain materials as they are, discussing the bias that they contain and using supplemental materials to "teach around" this bias. Some examples of sexist instructional materials are given below. For each example, decide whether you would write your own, re-write what is there, or "teach around" it. Use the space provided to write or rewrite, or to outline your plans for "teaching around."

1. Susan and Jane were making cookies to help their mother. They measured 4 cups of flour, 2 cups of sugar, and 1/2 cup of milk. How many cups of ingredients did they have all together?

2. Young children may have a better understanding of the function of seeds if they can examine one closely. Each child should have a lima bean seed soaked in water overnight. With the aid of the teacher he can break it open and find the tiny plant inside. He will see the miniature root, stem, and leaves. For a closer look, place the tiny plant under a magnifer.

3. Pioneers moved West, taking their wives and children with them.

4. Born in Manchester, England, in 1922, the daughter of a greengrocer, Mary Barrington spent a typical girlhood doing chores around the house and reading the works of female authors such as Jane Austen and Emily Bronte. Although she was considered attractive by men and had several suitors, she rejected the joys of marriage in order to pursue a literary career. Her sharp, masculine mind attracted the attention of instructors at Queen's College where she won the coveted Queen's Prize for Literature in her final year. By 1946, Miss Barrington had become a nationally known authoress, largely due to her best selling novel Crassington which dealt with man's alienation -- a theme that recurred in the eight novels that followed. Now semi-retired, she can occasionally be seen on the outskirts of Manchester, sporting the good looks and trim figure that belie her age.

5. English sentences are variations of one or more of these seven basic patterns.

Pattern I	The fire burns Some dogs barked.
Pattern II	John saw the train. The dog bit the man.
Pattern III	The air is cold. Most birds are small.
Pattern IV	My dog is a Collie. That man is a teacher.
Pattern V	Bill gave the dog a bone. Mother bought me some candy.
Pattern VI	Ann called this tree a maple. The class elected Bob president.
Pattern VII	The ride made some girls ill. We made the teacher angry.

6. Personal symbols are small, personal objects or possessions that have particular associations for their owners. To a woman, for example, a pressed flower might recall a dance she attended many years ago. A boy might keep a cracked baseball bat because it reminds him of the time he hit the winning home run.

7. The candidates were Bryan K. Wilson, president of American Electronics, Inc., and Florence Greenwood, a pert, blonde grandmother of five.

8. In 1876, Pennsylvania laws dictated that only a spinster such as Susan B. Anthony could sign a lease for the summer headquarters of the Association.

9. Find the topic sentence in a paragraph - -

> Mme. Loisel was a pretty but silly woman. She was unhappy because she could not afford fine clothes. She was wretched because she did not own the jewels she thought would enhance her beauty.

Have the students draw a line under the sentence which gives the main idea.

SUGGESTED RESPONSES TO WRITING AND RE-WRITING EXERCISE

1. Re-write. Have Susan and Tom making cookies, possibly to help their father.

2. Re-write. Change the third and fourth sentences to read, "With the aid of the teacher, the seed can be broken open to find the tiny plant inside. The minature root, stem, and leaves can be seen."

3. Re-write to read, "Pioneer families moved West."

4. Re-write the entire paragraph as follows:

   Born in Manchester, England, in 1922, the daughter of middle-class parents, Mary Barrington spent a good deal of her childhood reading the works of well-known English authors such as Jane Austen and Emily Bronte. She was intent on pursuing a literary career, and her sharp mind attracted the attention of instructors at Queen's College. In her final year, she won the coveted Queen's Prize for Literature. By 1946, Barrington had become a nationally known author, largely due to her best-selling novel Crassington, which dealt with human alienation - a theme that recurred in the eight novels that followed. Now semiretired, she can occasionally be seen on the outskirts of Manchester, where she leads an active life and enjoys good health.

5. Re-write some of the sentences to include girls and women in a non-stereotypic way. For example: Jane saw the train.
   Father bought me some candy.
   The class elected Joan president.
   The ride made some children ill.

6. Either eliminate the use of the passage altogether or change the examples so they are not stereotyped.

7. Re-write the sentence to describe both candidates in the same way.

   The candidates were Bryan K. Wilson, vice-president of American Electronics, Inc., and Florence Greenwood, general manager of Ralston Purina.

   or

   The candidates were Bryan K. Wilson, a handsome father of two, and Florence Greenwood, a pert, blonde grandmother of five.

8. Leave the sentence as it is and discuss the use of the word spinster. Why are unmarried women called spinsters, while unmarried men are called bachelors? Also discuss the reason for a law which would allow only unmarried women to sign a lease. This could lead into an interesting discussion of marriage laws, then and now.

9. Use a different paragraph to illustrate how to find topic sentences. Even though this example is from literature, don't use sexist examples when you don't have to.

YOUR COMMENTS, PLEASE . . .

Equal educational opportunity is the right for every child. We must do everything we can to make sure that the teaching tools that we use are sex fair and that they picture challenging opportunities for all children.

We are interested in hearing about how you have used the materials in this booklet. Please take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire and mail it to:

Institute for Equality in Education
1050 Ninth Street
Denver, Colorado 80202

1. Who used the materials?

_____ school board _____ teacher _____ Other (describe)

_____ textbook selection committee _____ librarian _____

2. Describe how you used the materials. (for textbook selection, in the classroom,etc.)

3. Were these materials helpful to you? Why or why not?

4. What would you include in these materials that is not included?

5. Please list any other suggestions for revisions that you might have.

RESOURCES

Below is a partial listing of resources that might be helpful for providing supplementary materials to students.

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Berg, Stephen, and Marks, S. J., eds. About Women: An Anthology of Contemporary Fiction, Poetry, and Essays, New York: Fawcett, 1973.

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Cornillon, Susan K., ed., Women in Fiction, Bowling Green Press, 1972.

Flexner, Eleanor, A Century of Struggle, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1975.

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Howe, Florence, and Bass, Ellen, eds., No More Masks: An Anthology of Poems by Women, New York: Anchor Press/ Doubleday, 1973.

Jacobs, William, Women in American History, Benzinger, California, 1976.

James, Edward; Wilson, Janet; and Paul Boyer, Notable American Women, 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary.

Johnson, Sharon, Women: Past and Present - A Secondary American History Course, Department of Public Instruction, Bismark, North Dakota, 1975.

Kirschner, Linda, and Folsom, Marcia, eds, By Women: An Anthology of Literature, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976.

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Houghton Mifflin Company, Avoiding Stereotypes: Principles and Applications, Boston, 1975.

Macmillan Publishing Co., Guidelines for Creating Positive Sexual and Racial Images in Educational Materials, New York, 1975.

Moberg, Verne, A Child's Right to Equal Reading, National Education Association, Washington, D.C.

Pennsylvania Department of Education, Self-Study Guide to Sexism in Schools, Harrisburg, Pa., 1975.

Racism and Sexism Resource Center for Educators, Sexism and Racism in Popular Basal Readers 1964-1976, New York, 1976.

Scott, Foresman and Company, Guidelines for Improving the Image of Women in Textbooks, Glenview, Illinois, 1974.

State Education Department, University of the State of New York, Reviewing Curriculum for Sexism, Division of Curriculum Development, Albany, New York, 1975.